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1827

Presbyterian church of the U.S.A. Presbytery of Oneida.

[The Profits of this work are devoted to a Benevolent object.]

A

NARRATIVE

OF THE

Revival of Religion,

IN THE

COUNTY OF ONEIDA,

PARTICULARLY

IN THE BOUNDS OF

THE PRESBYTERY OF ONEIDA,

IN THE YEAR 1826,

TO WHICH IS

APPENDED, AN EXTRACT FROM THE NARRATIVE OF THE REVIVAL IN ITHACA.

Washington:

PRINTED BY WAY AND GIDEON.

1827.

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At a meeting of the Presbytery of Oneida, held in Whitesborough, September 8, 1826—

The Rev. John Frost, Rev. Moses Gillet, and Rev. Noah Coe, were appointed a committee to receive communications from ministers and others, respecting the late revivals of religion in this county, particularly within our bounds; and to publish a narrative of the same, accompanied with such remarks as they should deem proper, and such suggestions as, in their judgment, are calculated to sustain and increase the spirit of religion in our churches.

NOAH COE,
Stated Clerk of Oneida Presbytery.

Washington City, d. c.
March 12th, 1827.

It may be necessary to inform the religious public that the following pages contain only such parts of the above Narrative as are deemed of general utility; while only those things of local character, and of minor importance, have been omitted.

Narrative, &c.

VERNON.

In this town there are two Presbyterian Societies, designated by the names of Vernon Centre, and Mount Vernon.

Vernon Centre.

The Rev. Mr. Barton, under whose labours the revival in this place commenced, being absent, the following facts were communicated by a respectable member of the church, in September last:

The revival commenced here in August, 1825. The number of hopeful converts is not far from one hundred and sixty-four. The number admitted to the church is one hundred and three. Twenty-seven of these are heads of families. The converts are among all classes and all ages, from 8 to 70. The youngest admitted to the church is about ten years of age. Several of these formerly professed to believe in universalism, and two were Roman Catholics. Only one among the hopeful converts, to my knowledge, has turned back.

The means which have been blessed, were fasting and prayer, preaching the plain truth and the whole truth of the bible, visiting from house to house, and meetings of inquiry. The church have been united in the work, with the exception of one member, who has since proved that he is not a member of the church of Christ. Great care has been taken to have the rooms, in which meetings were held in the evening, well lighted, and furnished with convenient seats. Means have been varied according to circumstances. Sometimes a dead silence in a conference meeting for two or three minutes, when Christians offered up one united supplication for

the out-pouring of the Spirit, has been greatly blessed. But what has appeared to me most useful, is a humble reliance on the Lord, an undoubting faith in his promises, working just as though we could convert sinners; knowing and feeling at the same time, that it is Christ alone who can change the heart, and giving to him *all* the glory.

Our meetings of inquiry have been continued up to the present time, and of late have much increased in numbers and solemnity. Several instances of conversion have recently occurred. Appearances are favourable, and we are still hoping to see great things among us. The opposition is great. It seems as though Satan had here centered his legions. Our minister has been threatened with horse-whipping. The active members of the church have met with personal abuse, and the worst of Billingsgate language. Among the most violent in the opposition are two *peace-officers!* But none of these things move them. They still live and pray; and some of the church manifest an increasing zeal in the cause of God. Numbers attend our anxious meetings, and many of them are under deep impressions.

Mount Vernon.

The following particulars are from the Rev. Calvin Bushnell, pastor of the Presbyterian church, received about the 1st of October:—

The revival commenced among my people about the middle of November. It was gradual, and did not become general till the latter part of December. The number of hopeful converts is about one hundred and forty. Fifty-nine have united with the Presbyterian church; about thirty with the Baptish church; and some with the Methodists. A number have not yet united with any church. The means are essentially the same as in former revivals, viz. preaching, fasting, and prayer; visiting from house to house, meetings of inquiry, and conference meetings. Among Christians, a good degree of harmony and brotherly love prevails, considerable fervency in prayer, and fidelity. There are fewer symptoms of apostacy among the hopeful converts, for the time, than I have witnessed in any former revival among this people.

The revival, at its commencement, was characterized by a remarkable tenderness of spirit among Christians, and a disposition

to confess their faults one to another. There was a season of great searchings of heart, such as I never before witnessed. Many old professors were so tried as to give up their former hopes, and, as it was said, obtained new ones. The work was also characterized by a more ardent and persevering spirit of prayer, than I had ever before witnessed. The converts who have united with the church, I must say, give as good evidence of deep and thorough conviction of sin, and real conversion to God, as in any revival with which I have been acquainted; and nothing of an opposite character has as yet appeared. Whether they are real converts or not, God only knows.

SKENANDOAH.

The revival in Vernon extended to the little church in this place, under the preaching of the Rev. Phinehas Robinson, who, in September, communicated the following facts:—

The village of Skenandoah participated in some degree in the divine influence which has of late been so signally enjoyed. The heterogeneous character of its population, renders it an unpromising field for moral cultivation. The church has ever been weak, and few in number. The moral and religious aspect of the church and society, in November last, was deplorable. This was made the subject of animadversion in public discourses at that time. Professing Christians were warned of the danger of self-deception. The great responsibility connected with their profession, was repeatedly enforced. They began to examine themselves, and to manifest increasing sensibility. Discipline was administered, a day of fasting and prayer was observed, and a spirit of inquiry began to extend among those who hitherto had been unconcerned. Plain and solemn addresses to church members, respecting their sins and obligations, had more effect on unbelievers than any other means whatever. During the excitement, there were frequent meetings in the week, as well as on the Sabbath. They were characterized by a great stillness, and a deep and awful solemnity. *Fervent prayer, and visiting from house to house, were among the means most blessed.* Many, by being visited, were led to attend upon the means of grace, who had wholly neglected them. The number of hopeful conversions were indeed few, in

comparison with the rich harvest of souls gathered in many larger societies. About fifteen is the probable number. Most of these were heads of families, from 30 to 40 years of age. When it is considered that this little number was gathered from a small obscure village which had enjoyed few religious privileges; that most of them were heads of families, training up a numerous offspring; that most of them were Dutch families, without an English education, and never before visited by a clergyman with a view to their spiritual interests—the heart of piety will surely derive no small pleasure from the fact, that this little number have been translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

WESTERN.

The following facts respecting the revival in Western, were furnished by the Rev. George W. Gale, who, on account of his health, removed there a little more than a year ago, and whose counsel and occasional labours have been a great blessing to the people:—

The moral condition of this town, which has always been dark, was unusually so previous to the late revival. People might be seen in almost every direction, pursuing their business or their pleasure on the Sabbath, while few repaired to the house of God to offer their devotions to him who hath said—"Thou shalt keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary." The establishment of a flourishing Sabbath school, and of prayer meetings, were regarded as favourable tokens by those who observed the signs of the times, that God was about to "turn the captivity of Zion."

On the last of September, 1825, the Rev. Charles G. Finney arrived in town, (after a short visit to recruit his health in this county,) on his way to the county of St. Lawrence, where he had been labouring with success, and where the people were anxiously waiting his return. The urgent request of those who were mourning over these desolations, that he would tarry here for a season, induced him, after some deliberation, to stay. He commenced preaching three times on the Sabbath, and almost every evening in the week, in different parts of the town, besides visiting during the

day from house to house. Professors of religion were urged to "pray without ceasing; believing the words of our Lord, that he is more ready to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him, than earthly parents to give good gifts to their children." Sinners were pressed with the duty of immediate repentance, by every truth and motive which the word of God presents, in language plain and pointed. These efforts were not permitted to be made in vain, even in this unpromising field. Christians were humbled for their past unfaithfulness, and led to pray as they had not prayed before. Sinners began to inquire what they must do. Convictions and conversions multiplied and spread through the town. In some instances whole households were converted.

In this interesting state of things, the overwhelming influences of the Spirit of God in Rome, rendered it necessary for Mr. Finney to spend all his time in that place. He spent twelve weeks here, after which his labours were required in other places; and there has been only occasional preaching with us. But meetings on the Sabbath have been kept up, and prayer meetings in the week in different parts of the town. Convictions and conversions through the winter and summer have been frequently occurring. The number of converts in this town, and that part of Lee where the people attended meetings here, is supposed to be about one hundred and forty. Thirty-seven have united with the Presbyterian church, on confession of faith; a number with other denominations; and many have not yet united with any church.

The great variety of denominations in this town has seemed to distract the minds of those who have indulged a hope of an interest in Christ, and prevented many from uniting with any church. This, together with the prevalence of universalism, unitarianism, deism, great ignorance of divine things, and the habits of utter neglect, and even contempt, with many of the institutions of religion, present powerful obstacles to the progress of vital godliness. The moral aspect which this town has presented, and which it still presents, and must for generations to come, speaks more than volumes could, the importance of "home missions," and of making the *earliest efforts* to establish the preaching of the gospel in every settlement in our country. It is now more than thirty years since this rich and populous town was first settled, and only nine years since the Presbyterian church was organized, and a house

erected for public worship; and this was done through the labours of a missionary. The means which God has blessed here, have been similar to those employed in adjacent places. Prayer has been signally answered. *While Christians have been* PRAYING, CONVICTED *sinners have frequently found peace in* BELIEVING. Most of those who give evidence of reconciliation to God, are among that class who have reverenced the institutions of religion, and the greater part are among the young. Several are quite young, even down to ten years of age. Most of them were religiously educated. A *few* advanced in life, give satisfactory evidence of a saving change, which, while it shows the danger of delay, teaches us not to limit the grace of God, nor wholly to despair even of the aged.

One instance has occurred in this town worthy of notice. It is the widow of the late Gen. Floyd, who was known as a Revolutionary officer and signer of the Declaration of Independence. The General was skeptical on the subject of religion. Mrs. Floyd, till of late, entertained similar views. For a year or two past, her sentiments have changed, and she has felt the importance of an interest in the Saviour; but it was not until the late revival that she has been enabled to cast herself upon the grace of a Saviour. And now, with a mind remarkably preserved and vigorous, though nearly eighty years of age, and perfectly blind, she grasps firmly the promises of God, and rejoices in the hope of salvation through the Redeemer.*

LEE.

The revival extended from Western into Lee. The following facts were communicated by the Rev. Mr. Snow, in October:—

The revival commenced here about the first of January. Many young people were deeply impressed under the means of grace. Requests for the prayers of Christians, from those under conviction, were frequent. At a prayer meeting one evening, the Lord was in the midst of us of a truth. It was the most solemn meeting I ever witnessed. Ten or eleven were in deep distress. Pray-

* Deceased since the above was written.

ers, which seemed to reach within the veil, were offered for them, and the mourning of several was turned into thanksgiving before the meeting closed. There are about fifty hopeful converts; ten only have yet united with the church.

ROME.

The following account of the revival of religion in Rome, is from the Rev. Moses Gillet, pastor of the Presbyterian church, dated October 30th:—

Gospel ordinances have been statedly administered here almost twenty years. Several seasons of revival have been enjoyed, and the church increased from fourteen members to two hundred and twelve. The fruits of these revivals have been manifest in the christian deportment of the subjects. For a considerable time, however, previous to the late out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, we had been in a cold, formal state. Meetings were well attended, and discipline administered. Still we ought to confess with shame, that there was much formality in our worship, and many faithless prayers were offered up to Him who requires us to believe with the heart.

In October, 1825, a revival took place in the town of Western, under the preaching of Mr. Finney, the influence of which was felt here. The latter part of November, the influence of the Spirit was visible in the conviction of sinners in the eastern part of the town, called Wright's Settlement. Meetings soon became very solemn. In about four weeks, forty might be numbered as hopeful converts to Christ. On the last Thursday but one in December, a church prayer meeting was held in the meeting house, which was very solemn and interesting. Great searchings of heart prevailed among professors. In the evening, a few individuals agreed to meet at a private house, half a mile out of the village. The house was crowded. After prayer, and reading a passage of scripture, a few remarks were made. One young man was so distressed as to be unable to suppress his feelings. He was heard to utter broken sentences of prayer. We united in our supplications at the throne of grace, and the spirit of the Lord appeared to come down suddenly in the midst of us, and to fill the room in an as-

tonishing manner. All present appeared confounded. Old professors stood and trembled. There was a death-like stillness, or solemn awe, such as I never before witnessed. Little was said, except in prayer. The young man was in great distress till toward morning, when he found peace in believing. Great seriousness from this time was manifested.

Monday evening, the last week in December, a meeting of inquiry was held for convicted sinners. Mr. Finney came here that evening, and remained four weeks, and was a distinguished instrument in promoting the revival. The meeting of inquiry was at a private house, and a prayer meeting at a school house at the same time. The room was filled with inquiring sinners. After prayer, personal conversation, and a short address, we dismissed them. Instead of retiring, they partly fell upon each other, and gave vent to their feelings in sobs and groans. It was with difficulty we prevailed upon them to retire. From this time, the excitement became general in the village. Meetings were held for about five weeks in the church every evening, and most of the time the house was crowded. Sometimes there was preaching, and sometimes only prayers with short addresses. Meetings of inquiry were now held in the day time, and in some instances three hundred and upwards attended. Great stillness and solemnity prevailed till the close, when sometimes there would be a burst of feeling in groans and loud weeping. We urged them to retire, telling them that they must look to Christ; that their impenitent tears would not save them. When not engaged in meeting, we visited from house to house. We often found sinners in great agony of mind, and *Christians in almost* EQUAL AGONY, *praying for them.* Although constantly engaged, it seemed we had little to do, except to look on and see the salvation of the Lord.

The description here given, falls far short of the reality during the greatest excitement. Wordly business was, to a great extent, suspended. Religion was the principal subject of conversation in our streets, stores, and even taverns. Merchants' and mechanics' shops were many of them closed in the evening, that all might attend meeting. Instances of hopeful conversion were most frequent about the second week in January. At two different times, it appeared that more than twenty were hopefully converted in

twenty-four hours. All classes of people were affected. Many who had regularly attended public worship for twenty years, and lived through revivals unmoved, were now made to tremble and bow to the cross. Four lawyers, four physicians, all the merchants who were not professors before, and men of the first respectability in the place, are hopeful converts.

Sabbath schools have been established here nearly ten years. We have now evidence that the seed of the word has not been sown in vain. More than one hundred and thirty who have attended these schools, are hopeful subjects of renewing grace. Children from nine to twelve years of age, give evidence of piety, and their promptness in applying passages of scripture, is truly striking.

During the greatest excitement, there was little open opposition. Scoffers were confounded: Universalists trembled. Some renounced their sentiments, and were brought to repentance. The moralist was stripped of his vain covering, and led to beg for mercy. Great is the change. "It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes." In March, one hundred and sixty-seven were received into the church upon profession of faith. The whole number received, is two hundred and eighty-four. Upwards of thirty have united with the Methodist church, and some with the Baptists and Episcopalians. The number of hopeful converts cannot be accurately stated; probably not far from five hundred; some of them were from adjacent towns. A number who have expressed hopes here, have not yet united with any church.

During the Spring and Summer past, meetings have been held every evening in the week. For eleven months, there has been no time when sinners were not under conviction, and but few weeks without instances of hopeful conversion. Meetings of inquiry are continued, and a spirit of fervent prayer still prevails.

Some additional remarks respecting this work of God, may be useful. After the revival in Western commenced, it became a subject of conversation in Rome, and many professors and others attended. Christians returned, feeling that something must be done. Our prayer meetings became large and solemn. Directions were given to pray for a definite object—for the influence of the

Spirit, to revive Christians and convert sinners. There was such wrestling and agony in prayer as we had never before witnessed. Christians viewed their impenitent connexions and neighbours, as standing on the brink of hell, and that nothing but the mercy of God could save them. They prayed as though they could not be denied; they seemed to take hold of the promises of God to prayer, with strong faith. In little praying circles, intercessions were made for individuals by name. Striking answers appeared to be given. In the language of the prophet, it might be said, "As soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." *Christians seemed to plead with God, as a child would plead with his parent;* and they found him more ready to give the Holy Spirit, than earthly parents to give good gifts to their children. Indeed, *the great instrument in this glorious work has been* PRAYER. Christians seemed to believe both the promises and threatenings of God, and in view of them have wrestled at the throne of grace until they prevailed. The word of God, in sermons, short addresses at prayer meetings, and in private conversation, has had a powerful effect in convicting sinners of their great guilt, and desert of eternal punishment. The truths brought into view, are such as have generally been termed the doctrines of grace. The justice, purity, and binding nature of the divine law, with its awful penalty, have been exhibited with great clearness. The sins of the heart have been exhibited, not merely for transgressing the law, but for rejecting mercy, for not repenting and turning to God. Christ has been exhibited as the only and all-sufficient Saviour. Repentance and faith have been urged continually upon sinners as their imme diate duty; that they were without excuse for not complying with these requirements. Convictions have been more sudden and more pungent than we have witnessed in former revivals. Sinners, in some instances, have trembled through their whole frame, in view of their guilt, and the impending wrath of God; though in no instance, to my knowledge, was bodily strength wholly suspended. And however strange it may appear, when sinners have thus been filled with mental agony, and bodily agitation, they have complained that they had no feeling, that their hearts were hardened. *It was not necessary to teach them that there is an* ETERNAL HELL; *they* FELT, *that without a change of heart, there could be no heaven for them.* Convicted sinners were exhorted to submit themselves

to God. They were told they must repent or perish; that they must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, or be damned; that their impenitent groans, and tears, and prayers, could not save them. Every false dependence was torn away as soon as possible. Often would they say—"We cannot change our own hearts." The command was urged—"Make you a new heart and a new spirit, for why will ye die?" No allowance was given to wait God's time. They were told—"Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation;" that the longer they continued impenitent, the greater their guilt, the more danger of becoming hardened, of grieving the Spirit, and of dying without hope.

Meetings of inquiry have apparently been a powerful means of bringing sinners to repentance. When hundreds have attended, there would be a death-like stillness, and great solemnity in almost every countenance. They were conversed with individually, and such instruction given as their case seemed to require. Often at the close of such meetings, they manifested such strong desire to remain, that it was found necessary to exhort them to retire and give their hearts to God. In many instances, convicted sinners have, apparently, been born again while praying. While praying for themselves, they would be heard pleading for others, without expressing any hope; though in a short time light would break in, and they would have peace in believing. Converts have been fervent in prayer, and many of them active instruments in the conversion of others.

It will doubtless be asked, with no ordinary interest, what are the fruits of this revival? Three or four instances of backsliding have occurred. One has been suspended for intemperance. These cases are to be lamented, and we hope will humble the church, while sinners may pervert them to their own hurt. In general, the subjects appear as well, if not better, than in former revivals which I have witnessed. A marked reformation in morals is too apparent to be denied. The Sabbath is more strictly observed; intemperance and profane swearing are checked; more good feeling in neighbourhoods and families prevails; the church is blessed with peace and harmony. It may be said, in truth, these Christians love one another. May it be our prayer, that no root of bitterness may spring up to trouble us; but that we may "keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."

CAMDEN.

The following facts respecting the revival in Camden, were communicated in November, by Mr. Kellogg, who has been supplying the pulpit of the Rev. Henry Smith, pastor of the Presbyterian society, during his absence on a visit to New-Hampshire:—

The revival in this place commenced about the 1st of January. The pastor of this church and several of the brethren visited Rome, to witnesss God's mighty work. They were refreshed, and returned impressed with the importance of a revival in this place. They endeavoured, by prayer and exhortation, to arouse their brethren. About this time, the Rev. Mr. Nash visited this place. His efforts were directed to the church, pressing them to repent and awake to duty. His efforts were blessed, and the church entered into a covenant to pray that God would revive his work. There was a season of deep heart-searching in the church. Convictions were soon visible among the impenitent, and increased until the excitement became general, and a number were hopefully converted. About the middle of February, when the influenza became very prevalent, the attention declined, and fears were entertained that the work would stop. A few of the brethren betook themselves to the throne of grace, and wrestled with God in prayer, *believing*. The work revived, and prevailed with overwhelming power. During two weeks in April, between sixty and seventy were hopefully converted. After this the work declined in power; but has continued through the summer, up to the present time. The converts, generally, appear to be steadfast, growing in knowledge and grace.

The means which were most blessed of God, were the faithful preaching of the word—the naked truth—not only in the desk, but from house to house. In visiting, the pastor was assisted by many of the brethren. The greatest *plainness of speech* was used in conversing with individuals. These means were used in humble dependence on the Spirit of God, manifested in fervent prayer for his blessing. *Christians prayed as they had never done before. They were* DISTRESSED *and* WEIGHED DOWN *with* AGONIZING PAINS, *especially in the* CLOSET, *pleading the promises of God*—BELIEVING THEM. Answers to prayer were manifest. NUMBERS *were converted, while prayer was offered up for them* INDIVIDUALLY. Young

converts engaged with zeal in the work, and partook of the same spirit of prayer. About one hundred and fifty have united with the Presbyterian church. A number have united with the Methodists. Many give evidence of a saving change, who have not yet united with any church; and many strangers and visitors from abroad were hopefully the subjects of renewing grace.

BOONVILLE.

In this place the people have not been able to support a minister, without aid from missionary societies. The population is scattered, and the people are much divided in religious sentiment; and many have cared for none of these things. The following account of the late revival is an abstract of a communication from the Rev. Ira Manly, who has supplied the Presbyterian church in that place, for a few years past:

At a preparatory lecture in December of last year, parents were requested to bring with them their baptized children. The text selected for the occasion was—"Come thou and all thy house into the ark." An unusual degree of feeling and solemnity was manifested. Not long after this, I went to visit a family, in which three of the members were dangerously sick. I was not permitted to see the sick and converse with them. Returning home, I reflected that it would be wise to exhort those who were well, and whom it could not injure. I accordingly commenced a course of visiting and exhortation, which I continued through the winter. About this time, also, I received an account of the revival in Rome, from two of our young men, who had been there on a visit, and had become hopeful subjects of grace. Their warmth and zeal were a blessing to me. The next evening, in meeting, I gave an account of the revival in Rome. It was attended with a divine impulse. From that time our meetings increased, till they were full to overflowing.—*Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists and Episcopalians rushed together, and seemed to participate of the* SAME *spirit. We endeavoured to avoid exciting any* PARTY FEELING. Soon after the revival commenced, a season for fasting and prayer was appointed, and measures were adopted to bring all the professors of religion to engage in the work. The preaching was plain and

pointed. Prayers were much more fervent than usual. Ministers from abroad preached with much engagedness. Meetings of inquiry were attended with great interest. Members of the church agreed to pray three times daily for the out-pouring of the Spirit. Family visits were made. A young man from Hamilton College gave us considerable aid, in exhortation, prayer and visiting. Some other young men also were useful. Conversions became frequent. This state of things continued with some variation till April. Some party feelings began to appear, and the Spirit seemed in a great degree to withdraw. Sixty-seven have been added to the Presbyterian church. Several have united with the Methodists, and some with the Baptists. The whole number of converts is probably towards one hundred. The converts, with few exceptions, are attentive to the means of grace. Many of them are much engaged in prayer, and most are willing, when called upon, to take part in this duty. In the midst of means, God has shown us that the work is his, lest any man should boast. It is manifest, however, that if our churches would enjoy his special presence, they must put away sin, and walk in the way of his commandments. Among the fruits of the revival are two flourishing Sabbath schools, a bible class, and a tract society.

WHITESTOWN.

There are two Presbyterian societies in this town, one in the village of Whitesborough, and the other in the village of New Hartford.

Whitesborough.

The following facts were furnished by the Rev. John Frost, in November:—

It is thirteen years last March, since I was ordained over the Presbyterian church in this place. Previously to this, the members here and at Utica composed one church, and their pastor, Rev. James Carnahan, preached alternately at each place. When the church was divided, there were about fifty members living here. Most were females. There were only four male members in the village. The society was feeble. There was a

respectable Baptist society in the place. No general revival had ever occurred. During the first four years of my ministry, there was a general work of grace, which brought into the church eighty-three members. The two succeeding years, there was no special seriousness. In 1819 and 1821, greater revivals occurred than any before. As the fruits of these, one hundred and eleven united with the Presbyterian church, and many with the Baptish church. During the three succeeding years, scarcely an instance of conversion occurred. In the latter part of December, 1824, the day preparatory to the communion was spent in fasting and prayer, and religious conference. The prominent sins of the church were drawn up, and formally read and confessed by the whole body. Promises also were made with respect to their conduct the succeeding year, such as the following:—"We will make greater efforts to progress in personal holiness. We will converse with our brethren respecting their faults, instead of talking about them to others. As we have opportunity, we will converse with our impenitent friends, and others over whom we may hope to have influence, upon religion." On the following Sabbath, the first in January, 1825, the church rose in the midst of the congregation, and after an address to them, renewed their covenant with God and each other. A deep solemnity pervaded both the church and congregation. On that day sinners were awakened. A revival succeeded, which continued till the early part of summer. As the fruits of this revival, about forty united with the Presbyterian church, and a number with the Baptists and Methodists.

The greater part of the subjects of these revivals, have been among the younger classes of society. As few cases of discipline have occurred among them in proportion to the number, as among the old members of the church who were professors when I came. About half the cases that have occurred among both, have arisen from intemperance; and from my own experience and observation, my impression is, that intemperance is one of the greatest sins with which our church and nation is cursed, and a fruitful source of most of the crimes and immoralities which abound in our land.

In the latter part of the summer, four bible classes were established. The day preparatory to the communion on the first Sabbath of the present year, was spent in fasting and prayer, and the same promises renewed which were made the preceding year.

About this time, the revival in Rome excited a deep interest here. Some of the members visited that place, and returned with increased feeling. It had often been a subject of lamentation in conversation, that there were so many heads of families among us who had remained unmoved in all former revivals; and Christians began now to be distressed for such, and the conversion of heads of families became the burden of their prayers. The fact, that many at Rome, of the same description, were the subjects of grace, strengthened their hope. *Prayer meetings in circles, composed of males and females, at different places, became frequent, and heads of families were prayed for* INDIVIDUALLY. Several weeks elapsed before any special seriousness was visible in the village. The church continued to wrestle with an earnestness and an agony greater than I had ever witnessed before. Some heads of families were in trouble; and such is the fact, whatever may be the cause, that conversions in the village commenced among heads of families. The latter part of February, the attention began to extend, and in March, was more powerful than any thing I had witnessed here before. Many old professors were convicted, and placing little dependence on past experience, were anxious for present evidence of repentance and reconciliation to God, through the Redeemer. Considerable murmuring, and some open opposition were now manifested. Misrepresentations and falsehoods were circulated. A lying spirit seemed to possess some who heretofore were apparently free from it. Some were angry that individuals were the subjects of prayer; some affected to sneer and laugh about the serious and the converted; some said the devil had got into the people, and others, that ministers and churches were becoming crazy. In this state of things, the following words were the subjects of discourse on the Sabbath—"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" "Wherefore do the wicked contemn God?"

The following week was the most interesting and solemn this village ever witnessed. Some of the most intelligent and respectable people in the place, were convicted of sin. Silence reigned. No opposition was heard. Christians trembled. They felt that God was here, and that the village was awed to silence, and prostrated before the majesty of his character, and his truth set home by his own power. Never did I feel my own nothingness so sensibly. I felt as though all I could do was to urge Christians to pray,

that breath might enter these slain. I felt at the same time, as though we were all unworthy to be *permitted* to pray for such a blessing. It seemed as though a still small voice said to the church—"Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God; be it known unto you; be ashamed and confounded for your own ways." Many interesting cases of conversion now occurred, at which the church wept and angels rejoiced.

When the business of Spring became pressing, the attention to religion in some measure declined; but convictions and conversions continued to occur through the summer. During the summer, instead of the little circles of prayer in the evening, professors met at five o'clock in the morning, at the ringing of the village bell. Most of those who have united with my church, have been religiously educated, either in families, Sabbath schools, or bible classes, and are among the most respectable inhabitants. One hundred and sixteen have, upon examination, united with the Presbyterian church; forty-five of them are heads of families. About one hundred have united with the Methodists, seventy-eight with the Baptists, and three or four with the Episcopalians. A number of those, however, who have united with the Methodists and Baptists, live in the limits of Mr. Coe's society. The whole number who have indulged hope, is not far from three hundred. Several, and especially among the young, have not united. A number who visited the place from abroad, became subjects. One instance only of backsliding has occurred, among those who have united with our church.

The means which have been blessed, were similar generally to those mentioned in other places. Particular care has been taken to have all our meetings closed at a seasonable hour. We have had no contention with other denominations. *Prayers were offered that none who professed to be the* DISCIPLES *of Christ, might be left to do any thing to* HINDER *the work.* A more general co-operation in the church has prevailed than in former revivals; and it is believed that to *this fact* it is owing, in a measure, that the revival has been more extensive than formerly. All our meetings have been orderly and solemn. Converts have manifested an unusual spirit of prayer, and a disposition to converse with others, and have thus done much to promote the revival. The greatest warmth

of feeling, in most cases, has been manifested by the most intelligent and well informed. The revival has produced a moral change in the aspect of society, visible to all. The number who attend public worship in the church, is greatly increased. Much harmony prevails in the church and society. A bible class has been established, which is attended by the elders and members of the church, and which promises to be highly useful. There are three cotton factories in the neighbourhood, with which perhaps five hundred people are connected. The superintendents of these establishments, are subjects of the revival, and manifest a laudable zeal to preserve them from immoralities, and to furnish the children with the means of religious instruction. Many connected with these factories, give evidence of repentance. Not only meetings were held in the evening for their benefit; but, during the greatest excitement, the factories were stopped in the day time for half an hour, when men, women and children assembled without any change of dress in one room, many of them in tears, and were there addressed and conversed with personally, and then knelt in prayer around the machinery. The sight was affecting, and will never be forgotten by those who witnessed it.

I feel grateful, I trust, and my church also, to all those brethren who have given me assistance, especially to the Rev. Messrs. Eells and Hotchkiss, who were here a few weeks in the midst of the revival. We lamented that Mr. Finney could not have spent a little time with us; but his labours were needed elsewhere. The few lectures he preached while at Utica, were useful. The *best* means, however, are unavailing, *unless a church are looking to God in humble prayer for help.* When my own health was wholly inadequate to the labour that appeared necessary, and when the church was most anxious for assistance, it seemed as though God constrained them to cast their despairing eyes to him alone; and he, by the conversion of some individual, and his consequent exertions, or in some other unforeseen way, supplied the deficiency needed. I mention this, because I never before have been so sensibly impressed with the special providence of God in favour of his people in distress; and never before have I so firmly believed, that if a church, however weak, will go forward and do what they can, trusting in God for help, that he will give them the aid they need, and in a manner that will, while it humbles, fill them with admiration at his own transcendant wisdom and condescending grace.

While we are bound to be grateful to the Father of all mercies, for the happy moral change which he has effected here by his grace, we have much cause for humiliation, prayer, and persevering exertions. Feeble has been the faith of the most faithful, and few and sluggish their exertions, compared with what are called for by the motives which the gospel presents. Many still remain among us who live as though this world were their home, and "death an eternal sleep." The blessings of Providence, as well as of grace, are still abused, and the intoxicating bowl is preferred to the cup of salvation. The hopes of many are, that the church will soon slumber again, and not disturb them in their pleasures and pursuits by her prayers and her entreaties. May the prayer of the church be—"Grant not, O Lord, the desires of the wicked."

New Hartford.

The following account is from the Rev. Noah Coe:—

In the congregation of New Hartford, the revival commenced the latter part of February, and continued about three months. The hopeful subjects of regeneration, are supposed to be about one hundred. Fifty-six have been received into the Presbyterian church, by examination, since the 1st of May last, most of whom have hopefully experienced religion during this revival. A few have united themselves with other denominations. About two weeks before the revival commenced, the pastor of the church, with an elder, spent two days at Rome, and on their return, they gave an account of the work of divine grace in that village, which was attended with a good effect. On two occasions, meetings of the church were held, and men and women were called upon to speak, if they had any thing to say, by way of confession, for their criminal departure from God, and in relation to their present feelings for the salvation of souls. These meetings, it is thought, were highly useful in promoting the work. The labours of Mr. Finney and Mr. Nash, the former of whom preached six sermons, and attended the same number of meetings of inquiry, were greatly blessed; as in these meetings of inquiry, it was not uncommon for two or three in every meeting to submit their hearts to Christ. Visiting from house to house, where there were convicted sinners, as often as every other day, was a means of doing good. Prayer meetings were very frequent, and for a time, there were many ob-

vious answers given to fervent, humble, believing prayer. In no former revival, have the subjects appeared, for so long a time after their hopeful conversion, in general, to possess so much of the spirit of religion; and never was the Presbyterian congregation on the Sabbath, so solemn and so interesting, as from the commencement of the revival down to the present time. The enemies of religion, (for it is not to be concealed that there are in this place Universalists, and others of kindred sentiments) have manifested very great oppositton to this revival, in repeatedly stoning the buildings where religious meetings were held, in the time of religious worship; in firing guns around the meeting-house during the hour of preaching; in suspending images from time to time, with papers attached to them, containing violent denunciations against those who were the most prominent instruments in carrying on the revival, and in one instance sending a constable to bring before a justice a young man who had been in the place but a few days, under the pretext that he was a vagrant, without any visible means of support. The work of God, however, amidst most violent opposition, went forward, and the effects most clearly prove that it was not the work of man, but the work of God, and to him be all the glory.

Perhaps in no place in the county, in proportion to the number of inhabitants, has the revival been more powerful than at the Whitestown Factory, situated between Whitesborough and New Hartford. The revival commenced at this place about the first of February, and for a number of weeks continued peculiarly interesting; and indeed, until about three months since, there have, from time to time, been hopeful instances of conversion. About fifty persons appear to have experienced religion during this revival, most of whom have united themselves with the Methodist church, which has since been organized near by, at what is called "the York Mills," and which now consists of more than one hundred members. The subjects of this work, for the most part, give good evidence of piety, and appear to progress in holiness. At the commencement of the revival, and for a long time afterwards, a few individuals were possessed with a spirit of fervent, agonizing prayer, which appears to have called down blessings upon that people. At that place, there are very many hopefully pious and devoted young persons, who we trust will continue firm and steadfast in the practice of godliness.

UTICA.

The following account is from the Rev. Mr. Aikin, pastor of the first Presbyterian church, and was received in November:—

The revival in Utica commenced about the first of last January. For several weeks previous, however, there had been a movement upon the minds of the people somewhat uncommon, that could be seen on the Sabbath, and on other days of the week, in the increase of numbers who attended meetings, and in their unusual solemnity. To this silent preparation for the Lord's appearance, soon a new impulse was given, by the daily reports of what was doing at Rome. Christians who visited that place, returned with various feelings. Some were confounded, and knew not what to say; some without hope, and in deep distress for themselves; others weeping over the state of the church at home, and anxious that something should be done. I resolved to call upon the members of the church, and either by myself, or by the elders, most of the members were visited, and after a short and pointed conversation, the visit, if practicable, was closed with prayer, not general, but *adapted* to the individual or families conversed with. It now became a time of heart-searching in the church. Almost daily, persons who had long been professors, and who had maintained a respectable standing in the church, gave up their hopes, satisfied apparently that they had been deceived. Soon, numbers among the impenitent were awakened, but most of them lingered along without obtaining relief. Still, there was but little of the spirit of prayer in Zion—but little of the power of supplication which prevails. Christians, instead of placing their confidence in God, were looking to arms of flesh; instead of having that faith which creates *expectation* of a blessing, they were merely hoping it might come.

This state of things continued till about the first of February, when the Rev. Mr. Finney came to Utica, where, as in other places, his plain and pungent and faithful preaching, was attended with evident and wonderful success. Christians had been told of their departures from God, their backslidings in heart, their lukewarmness, their love of the world and conformity to it, and of the necessity of a broken spirit, of deep and thorough repentance, before they could reasonably expect a general revival of religion. These so-

lemn truths were pressed again and again, and along with them the necessity of the influence of the Holy Spirit to rouse them from their slumbers. This influence they were urged to seek, as a blessing which God has promised, and will certainly give to those who seek it with faith. An humble and fervent spirit of prayer, to a considerable extent, gradually increased; and *as it increased*, convictions and conversions took place among the impenitent. It was not long before the work became powerful; places of worship were thronged, and the stillness of the sepulchre reigned, broken occasionally by a deep sigh from some heart that was writhing under the condemning influence of divine truth. Instead of noise and confusion, the meetings were solemn, and sometimes awfully so, by the presence of God, which made sinners "afraid," and Christians humble and still. True, there has been noise; there has been "no small stir about these things;" but it has been on the other side—among the enemies of the revival, as it was in the days of the Apostle.

The general features of this revival are the same as have always marked every genuine out-pouring of the Spirit, since the apostolic age. I shall, therefore, not repeat them; but would here observe, that like some of the former revivals in Utica, this one has been confined to no particular class in community. Its sweet and saving influence has fallen upon the rich and the poor, the ignorant and the learned, and moulded into its own lovely image, as we humbly trust, the proud moralist and the polluted debauchee. It has made "new creatures" of gamblers and drunkards, and swearers and Sabbath-breakers, and brought the self-righteous pharisee, the deluded skeptic, deist, and universalist, to abandon their dreams of happiness and heaven, without a holy heart, and to fly for cleansing to the blood of the Lamb.

The probable number of converts in Utica, is about five hundred. The number of hopeful converts, in a population like this, it is not easy definitely to ascertain. Not far from sixty persons, some of whom were travellers, who "turned in to tarry but for a night," or day, or week; others belonging to the towns around, experienced, as we trust, the grace of God in this village. More than a hundred, the subjects of the revival, have united with the first Presbyterian church; numbers with the Methodists and Bap-

tists; and how many with the second Presbyterian and Welch congregational churches, their pastors will tell in this report. Besides these, not less than fifty adults, belonging to the first Presbyterian Society, are entertaining hopes, who, for various reasons, still remain without the pale of the church; and to these, we may add many children, from seven to thirteen years of age, whom, although they give evidence of piety, the session have thought best for a time to catechise and instruct, until their age and knowledge and experience with the world, shall render it more safe to receive them. Accordingly, a class for this purpose has been already organized; nor has this good work of the Lord ceased. The spirit of prayer still continues, though in a less degree, and consequently conversions are less frequent than they were last winter. Scarcely a week has passed during the last summer, when one or more has not been brought into the kingdom of Christ. For the last six weeks, twenty have hopefully experienced the grace of God.

Whether all the converts are what they profess to be, the great day of judgment must determine. It would be strange, if among so many, some are not deceived. As yet, however, there has not been a single instance of apostacy among adults, that has come to my knowledge; and, judging from the fruits, the only safe criterion, now, after the lapse of eight months, never did the subjects of a revival appear better. But observation, as well as the word of God, has taught me to expect tares among the wheat; and if, in the end, there should be many of the former, it will be no argument that this revival is not the work of God. Indeed, we do feel and know that the Lord hath done it. True, he has wrought through the instrumentality of men, but the power was his, and to him be the glory. Besides Mr. Finney, who has been signally owned and blessed, important services have been rendered by the Rev. D. Nash, Mr. N. Smith, and other brethren in the ministry, who are remembered with gratitude both by the church and their pastor.

With regard to the means used in this revival, I should say nothing, were it not for the gross misrepresentations that have gone abroad. They are substantially the same as were employed by Whitfield, Edwards, Brainard, and by some still living, whose praise is in all the churches. The grand mean, and that into which all others are resolved, has been the *word of God;* the doc-

trines of salvation: the depravity of the heart, consisting not merely in the negative want of love to God, but in positive hatred to him; the law of God, its extent, purity, perfection, and binding influence; the sovereignty of God, illustrated and enforced, not so much by abstract reasoning, as by matters of fact; the nature and necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, and justification by faith alone These truths have been preached *constantly*, both in the pulpit and out of it; nor have we failed to urge sinners to repent and submit to Jesus Christ, and that *immediately*, as the only condition of forgiveness, warning them at the same time, that so long as they refused to comply, all their tears, and prayers, and efforts were ineffectual.

Believing it to be duty to use every lawful and proper measure to render effectual divine truth, we have, and we trust in humble dependence on God, visited from house to house, conversed freely with individuals, and fearlessly declared the truths in the street, in the grocery, the counting-room, and private dwelling. We have also had various small circles for prayer, as well as stated and public prayer-meetings; and in the former, females, in some cases, though more seldom than we could wish, have taken a part. The instruction administered in Sabbath schools, has been signally blessed, both to the teachers and taught. At the commencement of the revival, there was a bible class, consisting of forty-two young persons, under the sole direction of the elders of the church. Most of these are indulging hopes of eternal life. Their number has now increased to nearly one hundred, and the Lord is still blessing his word to the salvation of their souls. The bible is to them a precious book; nor to them alone. Never, in the same space of time, I am confident, was it so much read in Utica, as it has been for twelve months past. Besides these means, discipline, meetings of inquiry, days of fasting and prayer, and conference meetings for the church, have been very useful.

Nor is it true, that all, for this space of time, has been division and dissension in our village. Never was so large a church more happily united than we have been, during this revival; and it is so still. I verily believe there is here the "unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." Some few individuals may have differed from their brethren, with regard to the propriety of some measures; but

I have seen none who were blind to the mighty hand of God, that was bowing down rebel sinners on every side, and none so hardened in unbelief, as not to adore and rejoice in it. The society, also, is evidently strengthened and built up; and we pray God to send down his spirit, and bring in those who are left, that all may "worship him in spirit and in truth."

TRENTON.

The following facts respecting the revival in this place, were furnished by the Rev. Oliver Wetmore, about the 1st of October:

It is nearly two years since I commenced my labours in the Presbyterian society in the village of Trenton. I found the society in a very low and deranged state. Nothing special occurred until December last. Several professors, before this, began to mourn over their stupidity, and to pray for themselves and the church; and two places for special prayer for the out-pouring of the Spirit, were established, one in the village, and the other in a different part of the society. The day appointed in December, by the synod, for fasting and prayer, was kept with great solemnity. Many prayers were previously offered that it might be blessed. Nearly all the members of the church attended. A more solemn meeting I never witnessed. Prayers, exhortations, and confessions were made. The Lord was with us. Deep contrition was visible. The members confessed their long neglected duties to God, and to one another. *Several gave up their hopes, and were as much distressed for some time as* CONVICTED *sinners.* Indeed, great searchings of heart continued in the church during the whole winter and spring. Soon after the day of fasting and prayer, some instances of conviction occurred; but there were few hopeful conversions until March, when the work assumed a very interesting character. Conversions through March and April, were frequent. Convictions in most cases were deep, and of short continuance, though in some cases from two to four weeks. In most instances, the subjects gave clear evidence of conversion, and remain steadfast.

Great solemnity, and the utmost order have prevailed in our meetings. We have occasionally heard the involuntary sigh and groan; but nothing has appeared like fanaticism or enthusiasm.

In two cases only, has there been any disturbance. One was caused by a man who was intoxicated, and who was removed from the house by the civil authority. The other was by a person evidently under conviction, and whose feelings were excited in consequence of prayers having been offered up for him by a visiting brother the preceding evening. He soon manifested contrition, and gave evidence of submission to God.

The means have been prayer and the preaching of the gospel. The truths of God's word, which have been most inculcated, are the holy sovereignty of God; the extent and spirituality of the divine law, with its penalty; the character of Christ, as "God manifest in the flesh;" the atonement, total depravity of the heart, and the duty of immediate repentance and reconciliation to God; pointing out the great guilt of sinners in making excuses, that they *cannot* repent, and *cannot* love God, and *would* if they *could*. The conscience was pressed with all the seriousness and solemnity of which the speakers were capable. Meetings of inquiry were very useful. Christians, in these prayer meetings, have prayed for *particular individuals*, and remarkable instances of conversion have apparently occurred in answer to such prayers. Our prayer meetings have been one of the greatest means of the conversion of souls, ESPECIALLY those in which *brothers* and *sisters* have *prayed* TOGETHER. If God has *honoured* any meetings among us, it has been *these*. If I have ever been made humble, and to feel my own littleness, it has been at such meetings. One of our stations for prayer-meetings, at the house of an elder, about a mile and a half from the village, has been signally blessed. This was the spiritual birth-place of many precious and immortal souls. HERE, *Christians have been compelled to remain, in some instances,* AGONIZING *in* PRAYER, *till almost the breaking of day, for* INDIVIDUALS *who could not be prevailed upon to depart, until their peace was made with God.* From this place, the revival extended into the congregation under the care of brother Goodell. This "Bethel" will never be forgotten by those who there prayed and wrestled as did Jacob.

In the latter part of summer, a bible class was established in the village, which consisted principally of young females. In this class, consisting of eighteen, the revival among the impenitent be-

gan. Fifteen of these, we trust, have become pious. One was a professor. The other two were somewhat serious; but being under the influence of Unitarian friends, they neglected to attend the meetings of the class, and have reverted to their former state. Upwards of one hundred are hopefully converted. The number i great, considering the smallness of the congregation, compared with most of those which have shared in the same blessing. Forty-four have been admitted into the church, and we expect soon to receive as many more. Some have been added to the Methodist and Baptist churches, but the number I do not know.

The opposition to the revival has been great; but not from those attached to our congregation. Deists, Universalists, and many of the Unitarians, have endeavoured to bring the revival into disrepute. False reports have been circulated ; and this spirit in some degree still prevails. No unfavourable impression, however, has been made upon the Presbyterian congregation.

The influence of the revival upon our congregation, is visible in the increased numbers, the decent deportment, and the solemn attention of those who attend upon the worship of God on the Sabbath. On the whole, we have witnessed a wonderful display of divine grace in the conversion of sinners. Great has been our joy, and to God be all the glory.

The labours of the Rev. N. Smith, have been a great relief to me, and very useful.

I.

Remarks on the character of this Revival of Religion.

1. From the preceding accounts, we are constrained to acknowledge that God has made a rich and wonderful display of his grace amongst us during the past year, in the conversion of sinners, and the quickening of his children. *More than three thousand* are indulging hope that they have become reconciled to God through the Redeemer. About half this number have already united with the Presbyterian and Congregational churches, and a large portion of the remainder with the Baptist and Methodist churches. Never before have the churches in this region been blessed with so great a shower of divine grace.

The history of the church in every age, forbids the expectation that all this number possess that repentance and faith, which is unto salvation. In the little family of Jesus, there was a Judas. We may reasonably hope that the proportion of deceivers and deceived, is not greater among those who are numbered as converts in this revival; and if eleven-twelfths of this number are adopted into the family of the sons of God, and are heirs to the heavenly inheritance, great, unspeakably great, is the blessing, and great should be the joy, and loud the praise, of those who love and pray for the prosperity of Zion.

But while we are bound to give thanks to God for his distinguishing mercy, we have cause to mourn over our unfaithfulness as ministers and churches, and to weep over the multitudes who still remain "dead in trespasses and in sins." How many of these may have been left, on account of the unfaithfulness of ministers, and elders, and private members of our churches? Had every minister been as self-denying and devoted as the nature of his of-

fice requires ; had all our elders, and the members of our churches, been as united, as bold, and as active, as becomes the soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ, many more would doubtless have been brought to the knowledge and acknowledgment of the truth. How often may the Spirit have been grieved by those who professed to desire and pray for his influence? The judgment day may disclose facts, which, could they now be known, would furnish matter to us all for deep repentance and humiliation before God. Let every minister, elder, and private professor, inquire what more he could have done for the glory of God, and the salvation of souls, and let him confess his offences, beg for pardon, through the blood of that Saviour who died for sinners, and dedicate himself anew to his service.

2. This revival has continued longer, particularly in some of our societies, than has been usual in former revivals. It is now more than a year since it commenced in some places, where it still continues; and in most of our churches, an unusual spirit of prayer still prevails, and instances of conviction and conversion continue to occur.

3. Considering the number of converts, and the time that has elapsed since the revival commenced, the instances of backsliding have been fewer than usual. From the preceding narrative, it appears that, with few exceptions, those who have indulged hope, are steadfast, and growing in knowledge and grace. By their fruits in future life, their real character must be tested.

4. In this revival, there has been less appearance of mere sympathy and excitement of the passions, unaccompanied with *conviction of sin*, than usual. Most of the feeling, and the strongest feeling, which sinners have manifested, has arisen from the lashes of an accusing conscience. So far as this characteristic of the revival is owing to means, we believe it has been to the fact, that Christians have prayed much for the convicting and sanctifying influence of the Spirit, and that ministers have constantly pressed the consciences of sinners with those truths which show them their guilt, and their immediate duty to repent and believe. The whole man has been addressed—his understanding, his conscience, and his affections. The general strain of preaching has been far from what is usually denominated *declamatory;* and it has been equally

far from what is styled by the gay, the flippant, and the superficial part of community, *oratorical* and *popular*. There is a style of preaching, under which such hearers will *feel strongly*, and *love* to *feel;* and under which they may even weep, as they would over a favourite novel; and from which they will retire, delighted with the powers of the speaker, and the beauties of his composition. But such is not the preaching, under which sinners have been pricked in their hearts, and led to cry out—"Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

5. This revival has been characterized by a remarkable spirit of prayer. Often has it been said—"Christians pray as they have never prayed before." Many have been in deep distress, and felt what it was to *travail* in *birth* for souls. With this burden pressing upon their hearts, they have cried to God for help, feeling they could not let him go without a blessing; and where Christians have been *united* and *persevering* in their supplications, astonishing, and in some instances, overwhelming influences of the Spirit have been witnessed. So great, and so general has been the excitement, that worldly business was in a considerable degree suspended, and religion was the common topic of conversation in all companies and in all places.

6. Unusual strength of faith in the promises and threatenings of God, has been manifested in many of our churches. Christians have not only assented to the testimony of God, that there is a heaven and a hell, but they have seemed, in many instances, to have such a spiritual perception of these amazing truths, and others connected with them, that they have *rejoiced "with trembling."* With the eye of faith open upon the eternal world, they have laid hold of the arm of the Lord, with a *grasp* which seemed to say—*It is a case of life and death with our friends and neighbours; we* CANNOT *be denied.* They have notbeen denied. The ear of the Lord was "open unto their prayer," and "his arm brought salvation."

7. An unusual spirit of prayer has prevailed among converts, and they have manifested a disposition to converse with their friends and others on the subject of religion. It has often been remarked of them, that they were born praying. Many of them appear to have the strength of spiritual manhood, and promise to be among the brightest ornaments of our churches.

8. This revival has extended to all classes of society. Some have been born again in *old* age. Many, very young, have given satisfactory evidence of piety, especially among those who have been trained in religious families, and in our Sabbath schools. Many men of wealth, and learning, and talents, have been converted, and become like little children. Many, who in common parlance were moral men, have seen that their morality was devoid of that holiness of heart, "without which no man shall see the Lord," and have cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Many, who had embraced Universalism and other errors, have fled from their refuges of *lies* to lay hold of the hope set before them in the gospel. These facts should encourage ministers and churches to pray and labour for the salvation of *all men*, the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the old and the young, the moral and the profane, animated with the thought that "he that converteth a sinner from the error of his ways, shall save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins."

9. Great heart-searchings among professors, have characterized this revival. This we have seen in former revivals, but never before to so great an extent. It has been very common to hear professors say, with a solemn, downcast countenance, "I have no religion." They have had severe seasons of conviction. Some probably have, for the first time, been brought to repentance. Most, however, have, after a short time, given evidence of an increased devotion to God; and such have been eminently useful in promoting the work. Those ministers, also, in whose societies the revival has been powerful, have been led to close self-examination, and been apparently deeply humbled for past unfaithfulness.

10. Converts, especially during the greatest excitement, have manifested more joy and stronger hopes, than in any preceding revivals among us. Strong hopes have been considered by many, an unfavourable indication. Whether this be a correct opinion, we shall not undertake to determine. But it is worthy of consideration, whether the faint hopes of converts may not arise from not being earnestly pressed with truths adapted to their case, and from the want of more spiritual strength in the church, in wrestling with God in prayer for their deliverance from sin, rather than from deep humility, and a just sense of the danger of deception.

11. Much opposition has been made to this revival. This appears from the preceding accounts. But the half is not told, and for the honour of the county, we think, ought not to be told. False reports have been circulated. Gross misrepresentations have been made of the preaching, and other means which have been employed to promote the work. Prejudices have been thus excited in the minds of some, who are doubtless the friends of religion, but who have not been in circumstances favourable to judge for themselves. It is not to be expected, that men actuated by the best motives, and pursuing with hallowed zeal the most noble objects, should act with perfect wisdom and discretion. But from the preceding accounts, and from personal observation, the committee feel warranted in saying, that ministers and churches have exhibited as much sound wisdom and discretion, as has ever been exhibited in any revival of which they have any knowledge. Yea, we believe that there has been an unusual spirit of prayer to God, for that wisdom which is profitable to direct.

It would savour of weakness and spiritual pride in our churches, to justify every thing which has been said and done, in public and in private, by the friends of the revival. But we believe it a duty we owe to the cause of truth, to say, that most of the opposition has been excited by that preaching, and those means, which have met the approbation of the great Head of the Church. Indiscretions, real or apparent, are the only things which have given most of the opposers any *pleasure*. Their consciences, could they speak, would tell the world, that ninety-nine hundredths of all the *stir* they have made, has originated from a naked exhibition of gospel truth, and from the agonizing prayers and faithful exertions of the people of God for the salvation of their fellow men.

It is not the wish of the committee to dwell upon this opposition. Care has been taken to guard the churches from talking much about the opposition, and allowing their personal feelings to become enlisted by the falsehood and abuse of opposers. But we have said thus much, to give the Christian public what we verily believe a just representation of this outcry, and to prevent any from being alarmed at opposition to revivals, and neglecting to use means which God blesses in promoting them. We believe, from the history of the church, and facts that have occurred in this re-

vival strengthen the belief, that the elements of opposition to a revival of "pure and undefiled religion," exist in the most enlightened and moral districts of christendom, and are to be found in that pride, and worldliness, and ambition, and love of pleasure, which reign predominant in the hearts of the unrenewed, and which exist to an alarming extent among ministers, elders, deacons, and private members of the church of Christ. Many, in christian as well as heathen lands, have their idols, and they are too strongly attached to them to give them up without a severe struggle. Those who would attempt the work, must count the cost, and make up their minds to put on the whole christian armour, and prepare to receive many fiery darts from the enemy, before he will submit

II.

Means which appear to have been blessed in promoting this Revival.

1. Seasons of fasting and prayer. In most, if not all, the societies which have shared in this work of grace, days have been set apart for the special object of praying for the influences of the Spirit, to humble and sanctify the professed disciples of Christ, and to convert sinners. The blessing of God on such seasons, has been most apparent, where Christians have looked forward to them with interest, and made them a subject of prayer.

2. Confession of sin in churches. Wherever churches have met, and with evident *sincerity* of *heart*, confessed their "faults one to another," God has granted them a sweet sense of his forgiving mercy, given them free access to his throne of grace in praying for others, and great boldness and zeal in using means for their salvation.

3. Church discipline. This has tended to humble churches, and to alarm the impenitent. Discipline, judiciously administered, has been found a powerful method of enforcing some of the truths of the gospel. Many are hardened in unbelief by the irregular lives of professors. When such are led to repent and confess their sins, or are excluded from the church, one of the objections is removed, with which sinners often successfully ward off the sword of the Spirit pointed at their heart.

4. Visiting from house to house. This has been done extensively. *These visits have been strictly* RELIGIOUS. Every member of the family, capable of receiving instruction, has been addressed; and such visits have usually been closed with prayer, *adapted* to the character and circumstances of the different members of the family. By such visits, many have been addressed who could be addressed no where else, and who were thus brought to attend on the usual means of grace; cold professors have been roused, and many careless sinners awakened.

5. Preaching the gospel, its doctrines and precepts, its promises and threatenings, with *great plainness* and *earnestness*. Every

class of people have been addressed with truths adapted to their character.—*Churches* have been reproved *in the most pointed manner*, for their lukewarmness, their pride, and worldliness, and unbelief. *They have been urged as strongly to* REPENT and HUMBLE *themselves before God, as the most* REBELLIOUS *sinners.* This plain and faithful application of divine truth to the churches, while it has produced great searchings of heart, and led some to abandon their hopes, has, in several cases, excited greater alarm among sinners, than a direct address. The truths of God's word have been pressed upon sinners without respect of persons. The sinner has been followed into all his hiding places. Every mask has been torn off from the moralist and self-righteous. The deceitfulness of the heart has been exposed, and the sinner has been met at every turn, with the naked sword of the spirit pointed at his breast. While Christians have *prayed* with more *faith* than usual, MINISTERS have also *preached* with more *faith* than heretofore. They have felt the importance of probing the disease of sin to the core. *They have appeared to throw themselves upon the altar, resolving to preach the* TRUTH *of God, if they were* DRIVEN *from their* SOCIETIES, *or sacrificed by the rage of the* WICKED. This preaching has, as might be expected, produced much commotion. But while some have, with unwonted strength, braced themselves against the truth, and hardened their hearts, till their case may be hopeless, multitudes slain by it, have applied to the "blood of sprinkling" for relief, and have found joy and peace in believing.

6. Union of *feeling* and effort in churches, has promoted this revival. Where the great body of the church has come up to the help of the Lord, the work has been powerful: and although there have been in most of the churches, some who have stood all the day idle; yet a larger proportion have manifested a deep interest in the work, than in former revivals. The coldness or the opposition of PROFESSORS has been found *far more injurious* than the opposition of others.

This union in contiguous churches, has strengthened each other in the work. When sinners have been offended at the preaching in one place, or been convicted and fled to another for relief, instead of being countenanced in their opposition, they have met with the same faithful treatment, till worried with the stings of an accusing conscience, they have submitted themselves to God.

Some, it is true, have fled where they have found an opiate, which has lulled them into a sleep, from which they may never awake.

Nothing has been found more disheartening to ministers, than cold or cross elders and professors; but it is cause of gratitude that the number of such has been small.

7. Meetings of inquiry have been greatly blessed. As the nature of these meetings is generally understood, and as the manner in which they have been conducted in this revival, has been in a measure described in the preceding accounts, it is unnecessary to say more.

8. Avoiding disputes upon minor points. Care has been taken to guard Christians against *all sectarian* feelings. In some instances, injury has been done; but we believe that the churches generally, have done less to grieve the Spirit, by any improper conduct in this respect, than is common in revivals. Indeed we may say, that, with few exceptions, churches of different names have felt and manifested more solicitude to make *converts* than proselytes.

9. Urging awakened sinners to *immediate* repentance and reconciliation to God. No excuse, on account of human depravity, or human dependence and divine agency, has been allowed. To all such objections, a "THUS SAITH THE LORD," has been the reply. Where instruction was needed, the nature and reasonableness of these duties have been fully pointed out. If the impenitent have still pleaded any excuse, they have been told that the controversy was *between them and God*, and with HIM they must settle it. The effect of this mode of address, generally, has been, that conviction has *increased*, until the sinner has SURRENDERED *himself* into the hands of a holy, sovereign, and merciful God.

10. The visits of ministers, professors and others, where revivals had commenced, have had a powerful effect in extending the work. Ministers and private Christians have thus been refreshed. *When they returned home, they have told others, and exhorted their* BRETHREN TO AWAKE. Sinners have, in many cases, returned, rejoicing in hope, or deeply convicted. Thus, the holy fire has spread and blazed in every direction.

11. The preaching and other labours of evangelists, have been a very obvious and efficient means of originating and carrying forward the work. Ministers have thus received essential assistance.

More ministerial labour, which was so much needed, has thus been bestowed, than one man could have performed. The opinion of some, that there ought to be evangelists in the church, whose principal business should be to aid settled ministers in the frequent revivals which prevail in our country, is strengthened by their usefulness in this revival. Whether provision should be made for their support, by societies formed for the purpose, or whether this should be left to the liberality of churches and individuals benefitted by their labours, is a question which the committee feel incompetent to decide. The future providence of God may throw light on this subject.

12. *United, agonizing*, PERSEVERING prayer. This has evidently been one of the principal means which God has blessed, in originating and extending this work of grace. The promises of God, made to prayer, have been frequently presented; and *Christians, encouraged by these* PROMISES, *have wrestled with the God of Jacob, in* PUBLIC PRAYER MEETINGS, *and in the* FAMILY *and the* CLOSET. Prayer meetings have been numerous and frequent in most of the churches. Small circles for prayer have been held by Christians, where *both* sexes have engaged in this duty, and where *individuals* have often been made the subjects of special prayer. In these *little* circles, Christians have enjoyed the presence of God, and have had great freedom and boldness in approaching the throne of grace. Never have our churches, generally, appeared to entertain so delightful and exalted ideas of God, as the hearer of the prayer of faith.

13. The instructions given in Sabbath schools and bible classes, have been eminently blessed. A large number of those who belong to our Sabbath schools, give satisfactory evidence of piety. Superintendents and teachers have, in many cases, been the honoured instruments of their conversion. In several instances, most of the members of bible classes, have become converts, and promise to be among the most stable and valuable members of our churches; and should bible classes and Sabbath schools continue to multiply, as they have done a few years past, we may hope the time will soon arrive, when most of the rising generation will be converted in youth, and that the violent "stirs" now raised against revivals, will cease for want of materials.

Extract from a Narative of the revival of religion in Ithaca Drawn up by Rev. William Wisner, the Pastor of the Presbyterian Church in that place.

In the former part of June, 1826, *two* or *three* pious individuals appeared more awake to the worth of souls, than usual. The case of Jonathan and his armour bearer was brought up in a religious conference, and seemed to inspire some with confidence, that spiritual victory did not depend on numbers.

Soon after this, a *few pious females revived a prayer meeting*, which had slept for years, and the effect was, *as might have been expected*, REFRESHING *to the souls of those who attended it.*

In the latter part of June, arrangements were made for celebrating the Jubilee of our National Independence, in the usual manner; but a *few christians*, feeling that they could not participate in such a celebration, *resolved to observe the day* RELIGIOUSLY. This measure was pretty severely censured by some, as one calculated to make divisions, and many predicted a very thin attendance on the religious celebration. When the day arrived however, the sanctuary was crowded to overflowing; and the exercises were solemn and interesting. At the close of the service a collection was taken up to purchase bibles for the destitute in this town. From this time, the conversation in our streets was more upon religious subjects than had been common. A youth's prayer meeting was established, and the Sabbath school and bible class connected with this congregation were more deeply affected with a sense of divine things.

Through the months of August and September prayer meetings were multiplied, and a spirit of prayer among christians seemed rapidly to increase. The latter part of September a few sinners began to be affected with a sense of their danger, and on the 30th one was, in the judgment of charity, renewed by the Holy Ghost. *Christians* NOW *began to* AGONIZE *in prayer, and felt that they* COULD *not let the Saviour* GO *without a blessing.* In the course of the following week, another soul was brought to Christ, and in a few days we ventured to say there was a revival of religion in Ithaca.

By the 5th day of November, there were about sixty-five indulging hopes, and thirty-eight were added to the church.

From this Sabbath the work seemed to decline, and continued

to do so until it became very distressing to christians; and the enemies of religion, some of them, rejoiced aloud, and considered themselves as having gained a victory. The triumphing of the wicked, and the sighs and tears of God's people, were for some days heard and seen in our streets. A day of *fasting, humiliation and prayer was appointed, and observed by the* CHURCH,—christians, we hope, were in some measure humbled under a sense of their sins; they poured out their distress before God, and besought him, for the honor of his holy name, to revive his work.

On Wednesday, the 29th of November, two or three individuals requested prayers at our Wednesday evening lecture, and one of them that night obtained comfort. The next morning, *while a few christians were assembled* at the house of the individual above alluded to, to return thanks to God, and *unite in prayer for another individual* residing in his family, who was then under great distress of mind, SHE *too was converted to Christ.* A new impulse was now given to the work: Friday and Saturday were days of *great agony in prayer*, and a number were brought to submit themselves unto God. Sabbath was a solemn day.—Monday evening, the meeting of enquiry for anxious persons was much crowded, and two precious souls, we had reason to hope, were in that meeting delivered from the bondage of Satan. Tuesday morning, finding three or four individuals in great distress of mind, *I requested a few christians to meet at the house of one of our brethren*, to PRAY for them. The meeting commenced with five or six christians, and four anxious persons. The spirit of the Lord came down with great power, and *three* of the anxious persons soon began to rejoice in the Lord. "When these things were noised abroad, the multitude came together;"—the room, though large, soon was crowded to overflowing, the Spirit continued present with his regenerating influences, and many who came mourning went away rejoicing. None were willing to retire for refreshment, and *the* WHOLE DAY *was spent in* AGONIZING PRAYER. The evening service was at the court room, which was much crowded, and very solemn. By nine o'clock the congregation were dismissed, but I have reason to believe, with little disposition to sleep. Wednesday morning, at 9, the congregation assembled again, at the house of the brother before alluded to; but we soon became so crowded as to adjourn to the court house, which was filled with christians and anxious sinners, till about nine at night,

when we adjourned to meet the next morning at the sanctuary, to keep a day of thanksgiving and praise, agreeably to the recommendation of the governor of our State.

Thanksgiving morning, the sanctuary was crowded at an early hour, so that, though the house was large, every vacant space was filled with seats. An awful solemnity pervaded the whole assembly, which was only broken by occasional half suppressed sobs of anguish. Never before did I behold so solemn an assembly, and never before did I feel so sensibly the awfulness of the divine presence. When the hour of service had arrived, I preached to my people from the text "Rejoice with trembling;" and never in my life felt more like a dying man, preaching to dying men. After service, we had a short recess for dinner, and then reassembled in the court room for prayer and conversation. Through the remainder of this week the court room was crowded from morning till nine at night, for prayer and religious instruction.

The next Sabbath the sacrament of the Lord's supper was administered, and eighty-six persons received to the church. From this time the work was less powerful, though a very interesting and pleasing work of grace has continued down to the present day. From the last week in September, to the last week in January, there have been, in my own congregation, about 300 hopeful conversions to Christ, and there have been two hundred and twenty, added to the church, of which I have the care. Of this latter number, 80 are heads of families, 21 are the husbands of believing wives, 127 are baptised children. All ages have been brought in, from the old man of three score and ten, to the child of six or seven; and all classes, from the refined moralist to the profane debauchee. All professions and callings, lawyers, magistrates, merchants, mechanics, farmers and day labourers, have shared in this mighty work.

The work has been deep and solemn, and the most perfect order and subordination has prevailed I have known but one case in my congregation during the whole course of the revival in which there was the least disorder, and that was only a single exclamation of a female who was overcome by her feelings. Our evening meetings have usually been dismissed by half after eight, and always by nine, though christians who had the command of their time have frequently met at a private house and continued prayer after our public meetings were out.

Convictions have been *very deep*, and in many instances so overpowering, that the subjects of them have been *confined to their beds until they obtained comfort.* All who have been the subjects of this work, have been experimentally taught that the natural heart was wholly opposed to God, and that salvation was wholly of grace;—they have felt that they must be born again, and when they have experienced that change, they have ascribed it wholly to the discriminating grace of God. The church has been greatly refreshed by this work, christians have grown in grace and in knowledge, and have partaken largely of that love, joy, and peace, which are the fruits of the spirit.

In regard to the preaching of the gospel, it has been essentially the same as has been enjoyed here for ten years. I have always endeavoured to open and explain the nature of that controversy which exists between God and his rebellious creatures. The total depravity and deep rooted enmity of the heart against God, the uncontrouled sovereignty of Jehovah, the necessity of regeneration, justification by faith, the necessity of personal holiness, a judgment day, and the eternal punishment of the finally impenitent in hell, have been subjects which I have always endeavoured to keep distinctly before my people.

When sinners began to be anxious and inquire what they should do to be saved, great pains were taken to show them that their *first work* was to REPENT and BELIEVE, or SUBMIT to God, and give their hearts to him, and that until they did *this*, they performed NO DUTY nor escaped ANY DANGER.

I have been particular in stating this because I know that a different course has been pursued by some men for whose piety and usefulness I have a very high respect, and because I am satisfied that an opposite course is contrary to the word of God, and dangerous to the souls of men. It is the duty of all men to pray, lifting up HOLY hands; but it is an awful insult to have the impenitent rebel lift up his polluted hands towards the throne of the Eternal, while his heart is rankling with enmity against God. Every impenitent sinner is the rebel enemy of heaven, and if you set him to doing *any thing* as a *means* of becoming reconciled to God, you divert his attention from the *immediate duty* of repentance and faith. It is a total perversion of the scriptures to talk of the sinner's making use of *means* with God; the means of grace are in the hands of the Lord, and HE is using them with his rebel

creatures, and it is only necessary for them to *accept* of his offers of eternal life, and their souls shall live. *Submission* or DAMNATION is the alternative which God places before the sinner, and we had better not substitute any thing else for it.

I have never seen or read of a revival in which the almighty power of God was so visible, since the days of the apostles. Though christians have been greatly encouraged to work, they have been led to see that they were nothing but instruments in the hands of that God, who, though he condescended to work by them, could as easily work without them.

I have had but little help from abroad—probably not more than four or five sermons during the whole of the revival, with the exception of the timely help afforded me by the Presbytery during their session in January, which I have reason to hope was greatly blessed to the souls of my people. But what I have lacked in assistance from abroad has been made up to me by the zealous and unremitting efforts of the ELDERS of the church, and my LAY MEMBERS. The brethren of the church, including the young converts, have come up *in a* BODY *to the* WORK *of the* LORD. Our *pious females* too, though they have conceived it their duty to keep silence in the church, have been indefatigable in their humble and unassuming labours of love. I have always had a high esteem for the pious labours of *private* christians, but *I have never till* NOW *seen the* GLORIOUS EFFICACY *of such exertions.* I have been told in times past, by some of my ministerial brethren, that to encourage LAYMEN to go forward in exhortation and prayer, would lead them to usurp authority, and aim at being rulers in the church; but I can now say from the test of experience, that there is NO FOUNDATION *for such fears.* Those dear brethren in Christ, with whom I have taken sweet counsel as we walked to the house of God, and who have sustained and supported me under a weight of responsibility and labour *which I could never have borne* ALONE, have been the farthest from assuming authority, or indulging in a haughty spirit. I am satisfied that there has been a sad mistake in the church of God on this subject; and before the world shall be brought into subjection to the law of Christ; ALL who hear and accept the gospel will join their voice with the spirit and the bride and say "*come.*"

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